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TO MR. JACOBS,

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON

THE COLORED POPULATION,

IN THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES OF MARYLAND.

A FEW THOUGHTS,

On those most monstrous propositions before the Legislature, to expel the free colored people from the State, unless they voluntarily become slaves—if they decline, to sell them into slavery by compulsion. To sell their property, in the counties to sell their churches, and place the same in the treasury for a school fund to educate our children, &c. &c.

Violent and extreme men at the present time are thrown upon the surface of the political world, with them come violent and extreme propositions which would have horrified our fathers. Mad on their idols they are enraged at all who will not bow down and worship the image they set up.

The time has come, said a man to us a few weeks since, when every man in this State and South will be set down for pro-slavery or abolitionism—with no middle ground. Against both we protest, even if the furnace be heated seven times hotter.

Born and reared in this State, having lived in it nearly half a century, all our interests South, and knowing it, we have reason for saying that it is a misrepresentation of the South, and say unqualifiedly, of the people of Maryland. We repudiate it as one of the grossest calumnies to say that one-tenth, or one in a hundred of the people approved of the proposition of Mr. Jacobs, to expel the free blacks or compel them into slavery, and sell their property, &c. Are the people of Maryland dogs that they should do this thing?

The Hon. James A. Pearce, our Senator, in Jan. 1859, at the slaveholders convention said, "He did not think there was a man in that convention or in attendance upon it, who would approve of such a proposition. If they had nothing better to do than expel all the free negroes, or to sell them into slavery, they had better adjourn *sine die*."

We thought when these propositions were hooted out of a convention of slaveholders, and ridiculed by the press, the free colored people would be let alone. Not so. Propositions equally monstrous are before our Legislature.

"*No slave hereafter to be emancipated. Those emancipated since* 1832, *to be made slaves again. No free colored person to hold or acquire real estate. What they have take it from them and sell it. If they wont voluntarily become slaves, take them and sell them into slavery. Sell their churches in the counties. Place the proceeds in the State treasury, for a school fund, &c., &c.*"

These propositions are made in Maryland in 1860. Thirty years back, slaveholders here, in Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky, and other States South, were a century in advance of such ideas. They held, that God in his providence, had thrown these people among us, and designed that we should exert an influence to elevate and christianize, and prepare them for a return to their fatherland.

Masters felt a responsibility to act humanely, provide for their support, give them instruction. Many in their last wills, as the records of our Orphans' Courts will show, emancipated them. This was an inducement to fidelity. Some provided for their removal to Africa in a noble and generous manner. Mr. John Stevens, of Talbot county, gave funds to build a ship of 500 tons to carry emigrants to Liberia. Twice in the year she bears these sons and daughters to their fatherland without cost. In Louisiana, Mr. McDonogh provided for the emancipation of his slaves, and in a most ample manner for their future condition. Through the South was the same feeling. Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky were on the very point of deciding upon the entire emancipation of the slave population.

Whence this change? Why do slaveholders' conventions, and our halls of legislation resound with these violent and extreme propositions? Some men have gone perfectly wild. They are ready to revive the slave trade, divide, secede, or anything that could be proposed.

This is not from any change in our people. They are as humane as before; anxious to do their duty to their slaves; not desirous of increasing their numbers. But mad, unreasonable men, as emissaries, have sought to operate upon our slaves. Hence alarm and excitement and irritation which years cannot allay. Witness the Southampton insurrection under Nat Turner, in or about 1831. Then the foolish and wicked project of John Brown.

The reactionary measures are proposals to open the slave trade, expel the free blacks, or make slaves of them, &c. Arkansas has driven them out. The same project is before our Legislature. These great and gross provocations to retaliate only injure the free colored man and rivet the chains upon the slave.

Because Abolitionists have tampered with and carried off slaves, shall we do acts of in-

justice to harmless, peaceable and orderly free blacks? Because a man is insulted by a foreign foe, shall he come home and abuse his neighbors? Shall we act like the drunkard who when turned away from the tavern goes home turns his wife out of bed, seizes his little child, dashes out its brains, and gluts his vengeance upon the rest of his family?

For the South, for Maryland, we say no.—It is revolting to justice, shocking to humanity, and will be an eternal disgrace to any people. If done to make political capital, it should deservedly kill the party. If to open the slave trade, or prepare the way for it, the curse of God and the age will fall upon it.

These free people, our fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, and brothers and sisters, citizens of Maryland, emancipated in good faith, years past. Shall we enslave them? Shall we be guilty of the crime before high heaven, of breaking their covenants, and compelling into bondage men and women, who by fidelity to their masters earned their liberty? Shall we put into the treasury the proceeds of their houses and lands and churches and liberty—to educate our children? Just as well put the mark of Cain upon a boy educated from such funds.

The thing is monstrous. Maryland cannot be guilty of such a crime. It would be a dark day when we become oppressors and robbers. As citizens we would hide our faces in shame, if such an enormity was ever sanctioned by law. Our honor would be gone, the finger of scorn and contempt would point at us from the whole world. The gallantry and honor, the integrity and morality, the humanity and everything that adorns our noble State, would be buried in shame.

By the love we have for the place of our birth, our home, the inheritance of our children—by the regard which we have for the favor of God our maker, by the regard which we have for the religion of Jesus Christ our Saviour, by the blessings which his gospel has conferred upon us, by the principles of that Bible in which centre all our hopes for future blessedness—we dare not sit still and sanction such an outrage as would be perpetrated by it upon so many souls.

Wise and humane men of all parties see difficulties in this whole negro question. We may find it difficult to support our poor, shall we therefore cut off their heads and bury them. Long ago God made them a large nation of people in Africa, gave them a country, one of the great divisions of the earth, most central, prolific in the richest products of earth; a population at least three times greater than the United States. It is of that people among us, that some imagine God had no higher design than to make them to be slaves for us in perpetuity. Such men are like the child who thought the ocean was only made for him to throw pebbles into it.

As a people they are the subject of prophecy and history as much as the Jew or Romanist. Ethiopia stretches out her hands unto the Lord, to receive the blessing of his salvation and the liberty wherewith he makes his people free. The Jew rejecting Jesus looks in vain for his Messiah, while the man of sin at Rome, who has for ages oppressed the nations, trembles at the handwriting on the wall, feeling in his waning power that the time of his end is at hand. The whole world cannot make the sun rise or set an hour before his appointed time. When he causes light no one can make darkness; when he brings to the birth will he not bring forth?

God is not dependent upon his creatures, nor will he regard their rage against his plans any more than the ocean did the bridge of boats of the Persian monarch, or his anger in chastising with chains, or the earth the curse of the Inquisition on Gallileo for holding that it moved around its axis. While such rampant leaders remember that God lives, they should not forget the lines of the Primer—

> Xerxes the Great did die,
> And so must you and I.

Dark and mysterious as God's purposes are to us, he will make them clear, not in the haste of men. With him a thousand years are as one day. He sent the seed of Abraham into Egypt for 400 years, during which time he suffered their masters to treat them in an evil manner, but when the time came he judged Egypt and brought them to serve him in their own land. They went down seventy-five souls, they came up a great nation, spoiling Egypt.

We are not an hundred years old as a nation. God has placed among us a large portion of this people, free and slaves. It is not necessary for us to believe that slavery is a Christian grace, or one of the heavenly beatitudes to do our duty to them. These people are among us as the snow or ice of the glaciers, gathering for ages upon the mountains; wind and storm and thunder will not move it, but when the foundations melt, or the snow accumulates to its point, the fluttering of the wing of a little bird in passing may set the huge mass in motion, which, in its terrible fury, overwhelms towns and villages in ruin.

All said and done on both sides of this question have not availed to remove the evil. Some say Slavery is sinful in itself and men ough, immediately to emancipate all their slaves; another class say it is sanctioned by the Bible, some think commanded, and productive of a higher state of society. "That is the true normal condition of the negro race, the only condition in which they can be useful, moral and happy, and is as essential to them as freedom to the white man. That it is as impossible to make good slaves of white men, as good freemen of Africans." So Mr. Jacobs in the slaveholder's convention in 1859. Not long after this convention adjourned, John Brown made his mad and wicked movement, which with the practical aspect of the times has kept our national government and many of our States in excitement on this subject ever since.

Is it wise when such a storm has been upon the nation, when the overwhelming flood has not entirely subsided, the wind scarcely ceased its terrific roar, to stir up and agitate, by

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asking our Legislature to reconsider our landmarks, change the course of our ship of State? It does not need haste but prudence. Let the clouds pass, the sun shine out, the waters abate until the dry land appears. Better wait for the green branch with the peaceful dove, than be hastened by the rapacious raven.

Extreme measures will not help the slaveholder. His conscience and the fear of God will not allo whim to be an oppressor. He could not conscientiously act the part of Ahab and Jezebel in taking Naboth's vineyard. (1. Kings 1. ch.) He w uld dread *the heritage of oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty.* If his children be multipled it is for the sword; and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread. These that remain of him shall be buried in death; and his widows shall not weep. (Job. 27. ch. 13. 14. 15. ps. 78. ch. 64.)

When measures become oppressive, and those that suffer have no redress at the hands of their fellow men, they must call upon God. He can deliver from the bondage of Egypt, open the Red Sea, take the wheels from the chariots, make the supposed places of safety pits and snares, while he rolls back the waves that overwhelm the oppressor. A few weeks since we heard a colored man praying in one of our churches that God would give wisdom to our legislators and direct them. Do the movers in the oppressive measures have no fear of these people going to God for redress? God has taught many a colored man as he did David and Luther, that, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, &c."—46th Psalm.

The movers in this arresting and enslaving and selling free blacks and their property talk as if they were the dearest friends of the colored race, seeking to act kindly and generously towards them in this matter. On their principles they ought to engage in the African slave trade as an act of charity. If slavery is so superbly excellent for the colored race, it is a pity the Legislature would not permit the movers of it to have an experiment of it for a little while.

These agitations led humane men in times past quietly and carefully to consider this subject, and form Colonization Societies. The States have nobly aided them—our own among the foremost. Lands were bought.—Emigrants went over. Colonies founded.—The country around examined and surveyed. Towns built and churches and school houses &c. God blessed these undertakings. It was no easy work to found such colonies, when we know the incredulity of the colored people and the opposition which was made by abolitionists and some slaveholders. Their minds were filled with fears and suspicion. Quite well informed persons of color enquired of us with great concern, whether the Mary Caroline Stevens, on her last voyage but one, had not been carried into one of the Southern States and her emigrants sold into slavery. These men, in their bills, would cut the colored people off from every source of information, and then condemn them for not emigrating.

Our connection with them is a problem ye to be worked out. They are not placed here for us to exhibit to the world our injustice and inhumanity. They were heathen. Shall a christian nation act as heathen to them?—When Egypt forgot Joseph, and treated him cruelly, God withheld his blessing from Egypt and blessed Joseph. He is the same God now. Just and true, without iniquity.

The slaveholder is now protected in his rights. No reasonable man ought to ask for any more legislation than we have. Our statutes groan already with enactments in defence of slavery, and in severity against the free. Every non slaveholder is ready to defend the rights of the slaveholder. Let him meet out something of the same kind of protection, or even mercy to the free.

There is to our mind an immodesty as well as unfairness and unkindness in the pressing of these propositions. We know well, that not one slaveholder in a hundred will approve them. Let politicians drop the subject and there will be peace in Maryland in a week.—If these slaveholders will press it, they materially damage their own interest, as the day will prove.

The proposition to prohibit emancipation is foolish as well as wicked. Shall a man who has inherited slaves be compelled against his conscience, if he be disturbed on that subject, to hold men in slavery or sell them into slavery. There are now 10,156 out of the 16 040 slaveholders in the State, who do not hold on an averyage three slaves each. In the course of ten years, the large part of their owners may die or see fit to emancipate them. We have noticed for thirty years, that almost every humane man or woman whom we have known die, and who has in time prepared his last will, has provided for the emancipation of his slaves, and others who have not made that preparation have requested their children and heirs to made the provision. We ask in the name of humanity, shall a dying man, whose conscience requires him to do what has always been considered a humane act, have a statute of the State, requiring of him in that dying hour to perpetuate the slavery of his family and body servant, among those with whom he would not permit him to dwell when living. Such laws only act as millstones about the neck of the slave institution, and if men will enact them, they must run the risk which the man does who ties his bag of gold around his neck and jumps off the sinking vessel, hoping to save himself and his treasure.

The slaveholding population are protected in their farm hands and house servants, and everything that makes the lands and property of the slaveholder productive and his household comfortable. Does he, in return for that, say to the non slaveholder, you and your sons must enter your fields and do the labor—your wives and your daughters must become the cooks and washerwomen and house servants, while we an aristocratic band will sit in state as the grandees of the State. This is asking a little too much.

The white population in 1850 was.....	417,943
The free colored.....	74,723
The slave.....	90,368
Entire population.....	583,034
The slaveholders in Maryland were 16,040.	
Of these that only hold one slave there were	4,825
That hold over one and less than five.....	5 331
Over five and less than ten.....	3,327
	13,483
Holding over ten and less than 500.....	2,557

At the outside there are not over 16,040 families to be served by the slave population, and many of these have to hire free colored servants. What then is to be done for the remaining population who are not slaveholders?

We frankly confess, that such propositions on the part of the few slaveholders that make them, do strike us with amazement. Do they suppose that the farmers, and merchants, and citizens who now employ the free colored population as hirelings to do their work, would rest satisfied in an attempt to take them from their fields and stores? Think of a police officer under such a law arresting a man's wagoner or carriage driver on the way to the post-office, the mill, for a doctor, or court, or the city.

The interests of the non slaveholding population now suffer for want of laborers. What are they to do? Put away the free colored population? Stop emancipation? Then the non-slaveholders are shut up to an alternative which would soon make slaveholding in Maryland only a name. Just as certain as that the sun rises and sets, Maryland would soon be a non-slaveholding State. It could hardly take the slaveholder by surprise in saying to him that if the free colored population are removed, there is no safety for the interest he has in his slaves. How long will slave labor compete with free white labor? The free colored population instead of being an injury to the slaveholder's interest, is the main defence which they have. It keeps out that much free white labor, which would soon make an end to the slave interest. It is defended when we defend the free colored man.

We speak for humanity when we call upon every citizen of Maryland to loath and abhor such abominable propositions as are contained in these bills. We speak for the honor of our State, of our race, when we say that it is monstrous and characteristic of a slave dealer on the coast of Africa, or petty slave-dealers among us.

Every denomination of Christians, with every minister of the Gospel, will be bound in conscience to lift up a voice of condemnation. It would say little for human nature, if there be found a district in the State where such measures will meet with approbation. We have met but one man who did not unqualifiedly condemn the whole movement, and he only thought something should be done to make idle and lazy men work, which would be a good measure for white or colored. Any action is needless. Our State had been getting along quietly and prosperously. There was not the least excitement on this subject when the Slaveholders' Convention met in January, 1859. From that meeting no good has arisen for the slaveholder, and from the action proposed in the Legislature, no good can arise except in the utter rejection of those propositions. A man must know little of the State who can imagine that more than one in ten of the delegates that would vote for such measures, would again hold a seat in the General Assembly.

This is the first time that we have ever written a line on this question. But when a proposition so utterly inhuman, unchristian, unkind, monstrous in the extreme, is proposed, let no man be silent.

We conjure every citizen of Maryland, who has in him the heart of a man to feel for his fellow man, and who has the fear of God before his eyes, to set himself against the whole series of these measures. Let us do our duty to this race while they are among us. Let us try and keep them from the vices which injure them, and by the moral force which God gives us in our place try to improve them and fit them to be blessings in their own land. Oppression never tended to improve men. Unkindness, harshness and cruelty, are not the treatment which God has laid down in his word as the rule by which we should act toward our fellow man—"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."—Luke vi 31. If the movers of these bills will apply this rule personally, we do not believe that there will be any necessity at the present time, for any special action upon any of them. They had better let things alone until there is some reason among ourselves for disturbing our peaceful relations.

The agitation of this question by these slaveholders, we hope is not done for the purpose of producing sectional strife, and we hope that no such tendency will come of it. But politicians are men, who count on numbers as much as on principles. Few of them have any such love for a free negro or a slave, that he will let it hinder his election when he is a candidate. In this view of the matter at this time we are much more amazed at the agitating of the people of Maryland by the question. Lay aside these bills. Quiet down the subject. Always conservative and union abiding, let us as a State suffer no cause for any enemy of our national peace and union, to stir up strife among us. If we do, the evils must be to those who bring them on. If the reaction comes back with tenfold force upon the slaveholders, they will have none to blame, but their zealous friends, who put them in the place of the patient, whose epitath was written, "I was well and wanted to be better, and here I lie." ANDREW B. CROSS.

Baltimore, Feb. 16th, 1860.